

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 105

BY SENATOR PEACOCK AND REPRESENTATIVE HORTON

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To recognize the past and present contributions of women veterans from all branches of the United States Armed Forces and to commend the advocacy and support afforded female veterans through the Women Veterans of the Ark-La-Tex organization.

WHEREAS, women's service in the military dates back to the Revolutionary War and women have served in every major war and conflict in American history; and

WHEREAS, during the American Revolution, women served as hospital matrons, cooks, laundresses, ammunition carriers, and water bearers; some women took up arms and fought disguised as men; and

WHEREAS, as society changed, the role of women in the military evolved from restrictive parameters set by gender bias and stereotypes to the complete integration of today's female soldier into support of and deployment in every phase of the national defense infrastructure including combat operations; and

WHEREAS, there are presently more than 32,000 women veterans in the state of Louisiana and approximately 2.1 million nationwide; and

WHEREAS, the transition from soldier to civilian can be a daunting task; Women Veterans of the Ark-La-Tex and similar organizations were founded to address the unique, and often unrecognized, challenges facing women veterans as they return to civilian life; and

WHEREAS, before discharge from active duty, a service woman must consider securing a new permanent living situation and future employment; Women Veterans of the Ark-La-Tex provide programs and other initiatives designed to address these needs; and

WHEREAS, these organizations are dedicated to connecting a veteran's skill set to the needs of the civilian workforce through employment opportunity networks, career fairs, and workforce development workshops; and

WHEREAS, any woman who has served on active duty, in the Reserves, or in the National Guard, and has been honorably discharged from the military is qualified to join; and

WHEREAS, the mission of these groups is to equip women veterans with the tools necessary to pursue a rewarding career, to empower these women to become entrepreneurs, and to encourage their mentorship of other women in military service; and

WHEREAS, Women Veterans of the Ark-La-Tex maintains strong support for women veterans in their region and educate their communities on the bravery, service, and sacrifice of women veterans from World War II until the present; and

WHEREAS, Women Veterans of the Ark-La-Tex honors the contributions of the nation's female veterans, both past and present, with special ceremonies on Memorial Day and Veterans Day; and

WHEREAS, through the rigors of military service that may result in health issues, such as physical disability and posttraumatic stress disorder, or economic downturns, sadly, female veterans are the fastest growing segment of the homeless demographic; and

WHEREAS, women veteran organizations perform outreach programs to improve awareness of the availability of federal and state services and benefits; and

WHEREAS, throughout history military women fought to change public opinions and perceptions about the mental and physical capabilities of female service personnel and those changes have also benefitted women in the private sector; their accomplishments have paved the way for present day active duty service women to achieve their fullest potential; and women veterans challenged the military establishment as trailblazers, risk-takers, and pioneers; and

WHEREAS, women veterans deserve recognition for their patriotism, service, and sacrifice to the preservation of freedom and the defense of the United States of America.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby recognize the many contributions of women veterans from all branches of military service

and does hereby commend the advocacy and support afforded female veterans through the Women Veterans of the Ark-La-Tex.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Sandra Franks, United States Air Force (Retired) and president of Women Veterans of the Ark-La-Tex.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES